DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 338 587 SP 033 382

AUTHOR Poyen, Janet; Rogers, Lorelei
TITLE Professional Development in French Education: An Investigation. A Cooperative Research Project.
INSTITUTION Calgary Board of Education (Alberta).; Calgary Univ. (Alberta). Faculty of Education.
PUB DATE 91
NOTE 43p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Biculturalism; Bilingualism; Core Curriculum; Educational Change; Educational Environment; Elementary Secondary Education; *Faculty Development; Foreign Countries; *French; Higher Education; Immersion Programs; *Inservice Teacher Education; *Language Teachers; Needs Assessment; Questionnaires; *Second Language Instruction; Surveys; *Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS *Calgary Board of Education AB; University of Calgary (Canada)

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to investigate and identify the current professional development interests of teachers working in Core French and French Immersion with the Calgary Board of Education. It was also intended to identify indicators that may be used to predict future professional development needs. A two-part questionnaire was developed. The first part deals with demographics and elements necessary for the creation of a composite teacher profile; the second part collects opinions on teaching and professional development in French education. The questionnaire was presented in two languages: an English version for the core French teachers and a French version for the immersion teachers. Respondents included 225 teachers in the core French portion of the study and 128 teachers in the immersion portion. The findings suggest trends and needs falling into three categories: (1) the importance of understanding change and the process by which it occurs; (2) the acceptance of reflection, one's own personal practical knowledge, as a valid means of improving teaching; and (3) an understanding of empowerment, which requires a kind of leadership that supports teachers as they take on greater personal professional responsibility. (LL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED338587

Professional Development in French Education
An Investigation

A cooperative research project
of
The Calgary Board of Education
and
Faculty of Education, The University of Calgary

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Poyen

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Janet Poyen
Lorelei Rogers

© 1991

SP 033 382

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project was first conceived as a result of meetings of a French Education advisory committee at The University of Calgary. We gratefully acknowledge the support and encouragement of Brian Donnelly, Supervisor, Second Languages Team, Calgary Board of Education, and Frank Oliva, Dean of Education, The University of Calgary. The project could not have been undertaken without their assignment of resources, both monetary and human.

We especially want to recognize the contribution of Anthony Marini and Claudio Violato, Faculty of Education, The University of Calgary, for their management of the data and their patient guidance in its interpretation.

Translation for the immersion teachers' questionnaire was thoughtfully and competently handled by Jocelyne Hampton, Second Languages Team. We wish to thank Jocelyne for this enormous task, completed within a very tight timeframe. Maryse Appave, from the same team, managed distribution and collection of the envelopes, and was responsible for telephone follow-ups. The effective completion of these tasks resulted in a high rate of return.

Before a questionnaire can be distributed to a target audience, it is necessary to have it tested by knowledgeable respondents. We thank Louise Dolbec and Pam Knight for the time they devoted to completing and analyzing the questions. Sylvia Monson also provided feedback both on question construction and on translation issues. The contribution of these three teachers was important to the final refinement of the questionnaire.

Thanks go as well to Shirley Casey and Maxine McGavern, from the In-service Office, The University of Calgary, who provided able assistance with word processing and document preparation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1
- Intent of Study 1
- Literature Review 1
- Structuring the Study 1
- Style of the Investigation 1
- Scope of the Study 2
- Rates of Response 2
- Data Management 3
- Introduction to the Findings 3

CORE FRENCH QUESTIONNAIRE 4

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE 4
- Age, Gender and Mother Tongue 4
- Language of Instruction For Educational Studies 4
- Use of French Outside the Classroom 4
- Professional Credentials and Affiliations 5
- Teaching Experience 5
- Current Position and Assignment 5

INTERESTS SURVEY 6
- Career Assessment 6
- Teaching Assignment 6
- Barriers to Instruction 7
- Lesson Planning 8
- Information 9
- Present Commitment to P.D. 10
- External Supports 11
- Preparation for Core French 11
- Learning Styles 12
- Reflective Practice 12
- Motivations 13
- Change Process 14
- P.D. Formatting and Scheduling Changes 15
- Assessing Providers of Professional Development 16
- French Language Development Activities 16
- Professional Development Interests 17

FRENCH IMMERSION QUESTIONNAIRE 19

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE 19
- Age, Gender and Mother Tongue 19
- Language of Instruction for Educational Studies 19
- Use of French Outside the Classroom 19
- Professional Credentials and Affiliations 20
- Teaching Experience 20
- Current Position and Assignment 20

INTEREST SURVEY
Career Assessment 21
Teaching Assignment 21
Barriers to Instruction 22
Attributes Contributing to Success 23
Preparation for Immersion Teaching 23
Present Commitment to P.D. 24
Information 25
External Supports 25
Lesson Planning 27
Learning Styles 28
Reflective Practice 29
Motivations 30
Change Process 30
P.D. Formatting and Scheduling Preferences 31
Assessing Providers of Professional Development 32
French Language Maintenance Activities 33
Assessing Professional Development Interests 33
An Intensive Professional Development Course 34

CONCLUDING REMARKS 35

BIBLIOGRAPHY 36

INTRODUCTION

Intent of the Study

The purpose of this investigation is to identify the current professional development interests of teachers working in Core French and Immersion with the Calgary Board of Education. It is also intended that it will identify indicators that may be used to predict future professional development needs.

Literature Review

The review was kept narrow in its focus. A search and examination was made of questionnaires, and their interpretations, that dealt directly with either demographics or needs assessments. Since the Canadian literature was most relevant to this investigation, the review reflected that focus. However, where materials from elsewhere proved particularly relevant, they too were included. An examination of selected topics in staff development and the change process was also made. An annotated bibliography is appended.

Structuring the Study

Given researcher understandings of the two teaching populations to be surveyed, it was decided that the questionnaire had to be presented in two languages: an English version for the core French teachers and a French version for the immersion teachers. There are variations in the two questionnaires to take into account the specific circumstances of each target group.

The teaching backgrounds and the strengths of the researchers determined that the English version of the questionnaire, i.e., the core French questionnaire, was developed first. It in turn provided a pattern for the immersion questionnaire, which was created in English and translated into French. When it came time for examination of the data, core French was treated first and the draft of that portion of the report was written before work began on the immersion data. The narration and recommendations of the total report reflect this order of writing. Many of the general observations about professional development appear in greatest detail at the beginning of the report but apply equally to both teacher populations. The detail of narration in any section should not be taken as a weighting of one section as more important than the other.

Style of the Investigation

A two-part questionnaire was developed. The first part deals with demographics and elements necessary for the creation of a composite teacher

profile; the second part collects opinions on teaching and professional development in French education.

The design of the questionnaire takes into account an interest in cross-tabulation of responses. Such cross tabulation is used to understand as clearly as possible the professional development interests of this cadre of teachers and allows for the description of tailored professional development activities. To facilitate computer scoring and cross tabulation analysis, both parts of the questionnaire consist primarily of closed-ended questions (fill-in-the blank, multiple choice, Likert scale questions, and tables).

Part I, the demographics section, consists of 14 questions common to both the English and French versions. Included in this section are questions relating to the subjects' educational background and languages spoken since these factors relate to likelihood of participation in various forms of professional development.

Part II, the interests survey, consists of 39 questions in its English form and 46 questions for the French Immersion teachers. It includes questions which ask teachers to identify their interests and questions which are probes to identify areas of developmental need. In all, the questionnaire takes approximately one-half hour to complete.

Scope of the Study

Teachers from the Calgary Board of Education who teach either Core or Immersion French were invited to participate in the survey. Given the relatively small size of the target population and the close connections between many of the teachers, all teachers were given the opportunity to respond to the questionnaire. Questionnaires were sent to 611 teachers (272 elementary FSL teachers, 106 secondary FSL, 144 elementary Immersion teachers, and 89 secondary).

Rates of Response

Respondents received individually mailed questionnaires with a self-addressed envelope for return. Confidentiality was maintained by separating the functions of mailing, collection and data entry.

In the Core French portion of the study, questionnaires were completed and returned by 225 teachers, a return rate of 59.5%. In the Immersion portion, 128 returns were received, a 54.9% return rate.

It is clear from the appearance and completeness of the returns that teachers were conscientious, careful, and candid in their responses.

Data Management

The principal investigators contracted the services of Anthony Marini and Claudio Violato, Faculty of Education, The University of Calgary, to carry out the data entry, management and interpretation.

Data analysis includes descriptive statistics for each item and cross tabulations for the identification of specific relationships between the profile variables and particular test items. The data is available on both hard copy and floppy disk, and will be archived should any subsequent analysis be deemed desirable.

Introduction to the Findings

The 128 immersion questionnaires and 225 core French questionnaires were dealt with essentially as two separate studies. In reporting on both versions, results are most commonly described as percentages. These are valid percentages, that is, they have been corrected to remove missing cases. In order to examine possible relationships between variables, contingency table analyses were conducted using chi-square as the test statistic. The levels of significance used were $p < .05$ and $p < .01$.

For purposes of the narrative, items are grouped according to the information they are designed to gather or the issues they are attempting to probe. Within each group data is presented and followed, where appropriate, by a recommendation section that includes a preamble of investigator interpretation and one or more recommendations.

CORE FRENCH QUESTIONNAIRE

In developing the core French questionnaire, the researchers worked from an understanding that respondents to this questionnaire are teachers for whom French is a subject to be taught and may be one of a number of subjects for which they are responsible. The questionnaire is designed to (1) explore teacher preparation for this assignment, and (2) separate teachers' interests in professional development related to French as a subject area from professional development interests in other subject areas.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE, CORE FRENCH

Age, Gender and Mother Tongue

Part I of the English version questionnaire provided the following demographic profile of core French teachers in the Calgary Board of Education. The average age of the core French teaching force is 40. It is predominantly female (85.5%). English is the mother tongue for 84.4% of the teachers; 8% are French and 7.6% are from other language groups.

Language of Instruction for Educational Studies

English was the language of instruction for the education of the vast majority of core French teachers although the pattern of response suggests that studying in French was more likely as they matured and had the choice to do so. The language of instruction in elementary and secondary school was English for 90.6% of respondents. 75.7% received their university education in English, 9.5% in French, and 13.3% in English and French. When teachers were specifically pursuing their teaching certificate, the percentage receiving education in English rises to 84.8%. For 31 teachers who responded in the "other education" category, it appears that this other education provided some opportunities to study in French since the percentage of those studying in English dropped to 54.8% and study in French or both English and French increased (16.1.% French, and 12.9% both English and French). Specifics as to what the other education was is not available.

Use of French Outside the Classroom

29.4% of respondents often or sometimes speak French at school; a further 4 respondents or 1.8% chose the "always" category; 23.2% often or sometimes speak French at home (2 respondents or 0.9% always speak French at home). In a social setting 26% speak French often or sometimes; in professional activities 51.8% often or sometimes speak French. Of this percentage, 18.3% fell into the "often" category. There is no way of determining whether respondents were including classroom teaching in this particular case although, taken in context, the question would tend to exclude it.

A further question sought to determine teachers' independent use of French. Four respondents (1.8%) always listen to French radio, one respondent (0.5%) always watches French television, 2 respondents (0.9%) always use French in their recreational reading. The following percentages were obtained for the "often" and "sometimes" categories: listening to French radio,36.1%; watching French television, 45.5%; using French for professional reading, 36.8%; using French for recreational reading, 32.7%. Of particular note are the 44.5% of respondents who *never* use French for recreational reading and the 41.1% who never listen to French radio.

Clearly, there are more opportunities in a professional setting than otherwise, although the question remains as to whether classroom teaching was included in this response in some cases. And, although there are more opportunities at school than at home, little or no practice takes place in what could be labelled as natural communication settings (the school, the home, social activities, and other recreational activities such as reading, watching television and listening to the radio).

Professional Credentials and Affiliations

51.4% of respondents hold an undergraduate degree, 38.3% obtained a post-degree certificate, and 10.4% have a graduate degree. The issuing province for the professional certificate is primarily Alberta (71.1%). 17.9% hold certificates from more than one province. 3.7% of teachers received their certificates from B.C., 3.1% from Ontario. (By not indicating that they hold an Alberta certificate, this latter group may have focused on the first professional certificate they received and perhaps think of their current certificate as a formality.)

Less than half of the respondents belong to a specialist council/ educational organization (46.0%) or read professional journals (49.8%). 14.7% are currently taking university courses.

Teaching Experience

The median number of years teaching experience is 11, for years with the Calgary Board, 9 to 10, and for years teaching core French, 6 to 7. 8.4% of teachers have some experience in French immersion teaching.

Current Position and Assignment

Elementary teachers with classroom assignments form the largest group of respondents (62.7%). 6.6% of respondents have an administrative position, and teacher-librarians, resource teachers, and "other" account for a further 6.6%. Only 21.3% are clearly identified as secondary teachers. 1.3% have joint

elementary-secondary appointments. Those who specified less common positions account for 1.5% of responses.

Taken as a total group, 24.3% of core French teachers are the only teacher with a French assignment in their school. However, if elementary classroom teachers are selected out of this group, 95.8% are the only French teacher in their school.

INTERESTS SURVEY, CORE FRENCH

Career Assessment

To assist respondents to focus on their own teaching and professional development, three questions were asked which allowed them to report on their teaching abilities and career vigor. In all three questions a five-point Likert scale was used.

When assessing the vitality of their career at the present time, 91.5% of respondents place themselves at the mid-point or above. 29.5%, in fact, choose the most vigorous category.

With reference to their general teaching abilities, 100% of respondents choose the mid-point or higher. 35.3% assess themselves as excellent teachers. However, as French teachers they are somewhat less confident in their abilities. The percentage drops to 20.6% in the top category, and 17.5% place themselves below the mid-point.

There is a relationship between teachers' assessment of their general teaching ability and their teaching of core French. That is, teachers who judge themselves to have excellent general ability were most likely to judge themselves excellent in core French ($x^2 = 20.68$; df = 2; $p < .01$); those who judge their general ability to be average judge their ability in core French to be adequate or average.

In further analyzing the data, it was found that secondary teachers feel more confident than elementary teachers about their abilities in core French ($x^2 = 7.00$; df =2; $p < .05$).

Teaching Assignment

It is known that the assignments of core French teachers vary widely and are sometimes established with minimal teacher input. A series of questions was asked to ascertain teacher satisfaction with core French teaching assignments.

53.8% are happy with the quantity of French teaching in their overall assignment. Those who would teach more (23.3%) roughly equal those who would teach less (22.9%). It should be noted that teachers who rate their

French teaching abilities as excellent are more likely to indicate that they would teach more French ($x^2 = 12.59$; df = 2; $p<.01$).

9% of respondents indicate that they would prefer to teach no French at all. The pattern of relationship between teachers' assessment of their teaching ability and their willingness to be involved in the teaching of French is also seen in this group. Teachers who see their teaching of French as only adequate are most likely to wish to be teaching no French at all ($x^2 = 43.40$; df = 2; $p < .01$). The assignment of these teachers to core French teaching should be of some concern.

With regard to the grade level(s) being taught, 68.5% of respondents indicate satisfaction with their assignment, the remainder being equally divided between wanting to teach at a higher or lower grade level.

A further question on French teaching assignment examines whether teachers work alone or with others. 95.8% of elementary teachers with a classroom assignment work in isolation while just 4.2% of secondary teachers and those with out-of-classroom assignments are the only French teacher in their school.

Recommendations:

78.8% of respondents grade informal discussion with colleagues as making a good to excellent contribution to the improvement of their teaching practice. For those teachers who work in isolation, this form of professional improvement for their French teaching is not available in the school setting. One response that comes quickly to mind is the releasing of teachers in order that they may do collegial observation. Before seriously considering this activity as a means of reducing teacher isolation, attention should be given to the low value placed on this activity by the teacher group.

It is recommended that activities be planned to encourage teacher communication These activities might take the form of interactions such as study and discussion groups, materials review committees, and participation on editorial committees for the district newsletter (see "Information" recommendations).

Barriers to Instruction

This question set was designed to allow the teachers to focus on factors in the school environment which can impact on their teaching and/or on the quality of the learning experience.

Respondents are clear about the meaning of this question set. There are only two missing cases for one of the nine items in the set; all others are completed by all respondents. Such thorough completion of a set of items occurs infrequently in the instrument.

On all nine items, large numbers of core French teachers describe their levels of concern as serious or moderate. Overall, close to 50% of respondents have serious or moderate concerns about all items (attitude of the school, class size, lack of appropriate classroom space, lack of opportunities for students to use French, lack of support materials, quality of program materials, students with widely varying abilities).

The highest number (80%) focus on class size as a serious or moderate concern. The next most prevalent concern is the lack of opportunity for the students to use French (69.1%).

Timetabling of French within the school seems to be the least of the barriers to quality instruction. For 17.3% of respondents it is a serious concern; for 31.1% it is no concern at all.

Recommendations:

In organized inservice activities, regardless of the major topic being addressed, attention should be given to techniques for working with classes of various sizes.

Lesson Planning

A number of questions were asked in order to ascertain teachers' opinions about lesson planning. They address textbook use, resource availability and preparation time.

The teachers were asked to what degree they take their lesson plans from the authorized French textbook and whether they are satisfied with the series currently in use. A four-point scale ("strongly agree", "agree", "disagree" and "strongly disagree"), with an added "uncertain" category, was used. 65.5% of respondents indicate that their lesson plans are largely taken from the authorized text and 66.1% express satisfaction with the series currently in use. A comparison of the response patterns indicates greater uncertainty in answering the second question, the assessment of the textbook series. There is a pronounced shift to the center of the scale, with fewer respondents strongly agreeing or strongly disagreeing, and more respondents in the "uncertain" category. This suggests that teachers are less sure when evaluating materials possibly because they are unfamiliar with alternatives.

Those teachers who use the authorized text for lessons have less concern about the quality of program materials than those who do not use the text for the majority of their lesson plans ($x^2 = 9.81$; df 1; $p < .01$). It would seem that those teachers who develop more eclectic and resource-based lessons are likely to have greater concerns about the quality of materials overall.

In response to the questions related to the availability of resources and preparation time, 61.9% strongly agree or agree that appropriate resources are available in their school and 57.3% indicate the same level of satisfaction with preparation time.

There are no statistical differences between elementary and secondary teachers in their use of authorized texts, their evaluation of the texts, their assessment of the resources available, their satisfaction with preparation time, or their assessment of the professional development options available to them.

Information

Two questions are specifically directed at assessing teachers' access to resource information at the district level.

Three-quarters of respondents (72.2%) agree that information on district materials and services that support French teaching is readily available. However, one of the information instruments, the district newsletter for French, is viewed less favorably. Only 43% find it a useful tool for classroom planning and one quarter of the respondents (24.9%) are uncertain as to its usefulness.

Recommendations:

A newsletter is an important communications tool. Some newsletters provide professional development and calendar information, some provide teaching strategies, some provide materials information and reviews. The purpose of the newsletter must be clear both to those developing it and to those receiving it. Furthermore, if there are different target audiences, those audiences must know what is addressed to them. Size and readability, frequency and regularity are all critical characteristics. Succinctly written items appearing on a regular basis are more likely to be read, even anticipated, by busy teachers.

It is recommended that the newsletter clarify its goal(s), develop a format that clearly reflects its purpose(s), establish a publication schedule and adhere to it. Evaluation and modifications should be undertaken only after the process has had time to establish itself.

Core French teachers indicate elsewhere in this questionnaire the importance of a personalized approach to professional development. They value reading and thinking, personal development, professional contacts, communication with peers and they see interaction with other teachers as an important form of professional development. If a newsletter is seen as a device for substantive professional development for readers, it can also be seen as substantive professional development for its editors and contributors.

It is recommended that teachers be invited to take on responsibility for much of the content of the district newsletter. They could be asked to form editorial

committees representative of the target audiences . Work on these committees would contribute to the professional development of, and provide recognition for, the participating teachers. Technical and logistical support should be provided by the Second Languages Team.

Present Commitment to Professional Development

Eight questions sought to determine overall commitment to professional development and specifically to professional development for French teaching. The results can be viewed with some confidence because a large number (71.6%) indicate that they have participated in organized inservice activities within the past twelve months. This should be a dependable base of experience for dealing with these questions.

56.1% of core French teachers indicate that they receive enough professional development for the performance of their present teaching assignment. When asked if there are so many professional development options that they have difficulty making choices, 64.6% indicate that this is not the case.

For 60.8% of respondents, French teaching is assigned a high priority in their professional development activities. An even larger number (81.3%) indicate that inservice in teaching core French is personally important. However, when asked if they are able to register for inservice in teaching core French within the next year, only 68.3% agree to that commitment.

Substantially fewer teachers indicate an interest in developing their French language skills. Only 51.6% agree that they require such inservice and a slightly smaller number (50.7%) would agree to register for French language development inservice in the next year.

Recommendations:

From information gathered in the demographic section, it is known that most of the respondents have English as their mother tongue and have not had extensive opportunities to study in French. However, there seems to be a lack of recognition of the need for improving French language skills and a similar lack of commitment to engage in language improvement activities, both organized and informal. On the other hand, teachers show a real willingness to improve the quality of their French teaching.

It is recommended that special efforts be made to reach the nearly 50% of teachers who have little commitment to French language development and/or maintenance. Language development activities should be incorporated as part of other professional development activities in which teachers show more interest.

It is further recommended that a careful examination be made of professional development that has language development as its primary focus . Assessment should be made of resource allocation, quality and extent of impact, and resulting changes in classroom practice.

External Supports

It is clear that the Second Languages Team rates highly in performing its responsibilities in support of the teaching of French. 88.8% of respondents attest to this. School professional development days and involvement with the university are seen to be much less effective. Only 17.1% find their PD days helpful to their French teaching. A similar 18.9% rate the university favorably. It should be noted that 39.6% of respondents were unsure of the helpfulness of the university. This suggests that almost half the teachers have had no involvement with the university in terms of French teaching support.

In addition to rating the assistance received for French teaching from various institutions, respondents were asked to rate individual roles within the institutions. Assistance from consultants and specialists is rated substantial or very substantial by 36.8% of respondents. 30% see this assistance as moderate and a further 33.2% opt for limited or none. These results are inconsistent with the rating for the Second Languages Team. The higher rating for the Team may be explained by the fact that its role includes more than direct assistance to teachers, or that teachers feel a personal relationship with, or a loyalty to, the Team.

At the same time, consultants and specialists fare considerably better than principals (4.5%), publishers representatives (6.7%), university inservice instructors (7.2%), and university professors (7.7%). Only other teachers are on a par with consultants and specialists in providing assistance with French teaching. They receive a rating of substantial or very substantial from 31.4% of respondents.

Preparation for Core French Teaching

To probe further for assessments of those experiences which have provided preparation and/or support for French teaching, respondents were asked to assign a letter grade rating to a number of experiences. The highest overall ratings of good to excellent go to district inservice (79.9%). Slightly over half (56.5%) rate professional organization inservice from good to excellent and a slightly smaller number (51.4%) assign these categories to their initial teacher training in French education.

Of particular note in this question are the large numbers who responded in the "not applicable" category. It seems likely that this response is chosen by teachers who have never had the named experience. 41.3% select "N/A" as the assessment for coaching of colleagues and 56.0% indicate "N/A" for university

continuing professional education. Although not as high a percentage, the fact that 19.3% respond "N/A" to the initial teacher training question suggests that a number of teachers do not enter French teaching through their initial teacher preparation.

Learning Styles

A second set of questions explores how teachers learn best by asking them to grade contributions made to the improvement of teaching practice through a variety of learning styles. There is a clear preference for learning activities that are unstructured and informal. 87.4% rate "reading and thinking alone" as good, very good or excellent.. "Informal discussion with colleagues" also rates very high (78.8%), followed by "working in a group with an expert" (64%). Once again,large numbers selected "N/A" to respond to this set of questions: for working with a coach, 53.6%; working with a mentor, 32.9%; reading and discussing in a group, 33%. This suggests that teachers have either very clear learning style preferences or have had a limited range of experiences.

Recommendations:

Substantial resources are dedicated to those teachers whose learning styles are suited to formal presentations and group activities while those who learn alone or informally are overlooked.

It is recommended that recognition be given to the styles of learning that are personal, private and individual, and that these types of learning be reinforced and rewarded. Innovative reinforcers might include the provision of: personalized learning materials; collections of selected articles; videotapes; gift books, both professional and literary; tickets to French performances; magazine and/ or journal subscriptions.

It is further recommended that teacher committees, such as a literature review committee, become involved in matching resources to individual teachers.

Reflective Practice

A series of probes was developed to determine activities which cause teachers to "think about", or reflect upon, the teaching of French. Responses were placed on a four-point scale, with a "not applicable" category as a fifth option.

As much of the literature on reflective practice suggests, teachers judge conversations with other teachers to be important in causing them to think about their teaching. Core French teachers are not different in this respect: 78.9% of respondents to the questionnaire indicate the importance of this activity.

District workshops are an important stimulus to reflection for 76.2% of respondents. 63.1% judge conventions, conferences, etc. to cause them to think about their teaching either a great deal or some. University courses serve this purpose for 31.5%.

Two categories are of particular interest because, by using the "not applicable" category, respondents may be indicating that they have no experience with the activity. They are university inservice courses (N/A for 42.1%) and mentor/protegé relationships (N/A for 35.5%).

Motivations

Seven probes were used to ascertain the motivational factors for teachers when participating in French inservice activities. For 96.1% of respondents, a desire to improve teaching skills is an important motivational factor. This is closely followed by the desire to become acquainted with new content/ideas (94.2%). 92.2% indicate that personal interest in the topic is a strong motivator and 76.2% appreciate professional contacts provided through French inservice activities. If examined by gender, this factor produces a statistically significant difference, with 85.5% of female teachers identifying this factor as important. For 65.5% of the group, social interaction is a motivational factor. There is no statistically significant difference related to gender when this factor is examined by sub-groups.

For less than half of the teachers (45.6%), French inservice activities are seen as a way to solve a teaching problem., while only a very small group (7.4%) see solution of problems as a strong motivator for inservice attendance. The literature draws attention to the general lack of success of inservice activities that are designed to remediate. This finding would seem to substantiate this assumption.

Slightly over half of the group (56.4%) are motivated by a desire to upgrade credentials. It would be interesting to explore the relationship between this desire and the overall lack of confidence of teachers in universities as providers of professional development.

In applying further analysis to this set of questions, a cross tabulation was done to see if a recent experience in inservice affected teacher assessment of motivation. First, it was found that professional contacts (81%) and social interaction are important motivators for those teachers who have attended an organized inservice activity within the last 12 months. Second, for those who have not attended inservice within the last twelve months, there seems to be a greater degree of uncertainty concerning their own motivations; for example, 66.7% are uncertain of the value of professional contacts and 54.5% are uncertain about social interactions as a benefit of inservice. Teachers who have attended inservice recently seem to have a clearer understanding of their motivations.

The "uncertain" category in this set of questions was chosen by 2.4% to 8.8% of teachers, and missing cases in this set vary from 18 to 23 instances. Because this raises questions about whether a statistically significant number of the teachers used the "uncertain" response for more than one item, selected cross tabulations were carried out. Teachers who are uncertain about their "personal interest" as a motivator are also uncertain about "improving teaching skills" (100%) and likely to be uncertain about "new content/ideas" (75%).

Recommendations:

There is evidence that teachers are unwilling or unable to deal directly with teaching problems in the presence of their peers. There is also evidence that teachers are eager to expand and enhance skills and techniques that are already working well. The path, then, to dealing with problems is to work through strengths.

It is recommended that when planning inservice activities the developers work always with teachers' strengths in mind.

Change Process

Two questions were designed to explore teachers' tacit/intuitive knowledge of change in teaching practice and how it might occur. The literature describes change as occurring individually and over time (Hall & Hord, 1987). The fact that 79.8% of respondents indicate a preference for "activities that are completed in one meeting" suggests that teachers do not have knowledge of how change occurs and/ or have not had experience with inservice that incorporates the change process. This interpretation is further confirmed by the second of these two questions "How long do you think it takes to learn a new teaching technique and incorporate it into your teaching repertoire?". 63.2% estimate one month to be sufficient time. 23.1% indicate a period of time greater than five months, and the remainder (13.7%) fall in between these two estimates. It is highly significant that nearly half the respondents (108) did not answer this question.

Recommendations:

When teachers are asked to make changes in program, in technique or in materials without a shared understanding of the complexity or demands of the change, stress and resistance result. It is unrealistic, even impossible, to expect change as a result of one professional development activity or at the end of a month of practice. The fact that teachers indicate a preference for single sessions and short time frames underlines their lack of understanding of the change process.

It is recommended that planners of professional development activities articulate a clear personal understanding of the change process and incorporate that understanding into their planning.

It is further recommended that staff developers convey the realities of the change process to the teachers with whom they work.

P.D. Formatting and Scheduling Preferences

A set of questions was designed to establish teacher preferences for presentation format and the scheduling of organized professional development activities. 55.5% prefer demonstration as a first choice presentation format. A further 27..4% select it as a second choice. Workshops are first choice for 49.1% and second choice for 29.1%. Seminars are overall third with 41.3% indicating them as first or second choices. The lecture is the least preferred format, although it is not to be totally rejected given that 18.9% select it as first or second choice.

The question dealing with the blocks of time that might be devoted to inservice activities produced the following results for the combined "best" and "very good" categories: half day, 67.3%; full day, 49.8%; a series of connected meetings, 33.6%; one hour, 31.5%; two full days, 26.6%; weekend, 17.8%.

When presented with choices for the timetabling of professional development activities and asked to rate them on a five-point best-to-worst scale, there is a marked preference in the best and very good categories for school day mornings (70.0%), followed by school day afternoons (50.5%). A Friday evening-Saturday combination is assessed as best or very good by 27.2% of the group. School days immediately following dismissal are favoured by 20.3%. Far smaller numbers select weekday evenings (12.2%), Sundays only (12.2%), Saturdays only (10.4%), and Saturday-Sunday combinations (8.1%).

Placing professional development activities on the calendar in blocks that relate to the school year and/or university year, and rating them on the same five-point scale, 74.3% prefer the September to December timeframe. Still within the school year, 50% prefer the January to March block. The next most popular time for inservice is just prior to the beginning of the new school year (29.2%). April to June is attractive to 19.9%, while July is favoured by 12%.

Recommendations:

One well-established professional development model is that developed by Joyce and Showers (1982). The four-step model asks for study of the theoretical basis or rationale; observation of demonstrations; practice and feedback in protected conditions; and, finally, coaching and provision of companionship. Models such as this are not congruent with the stated wishes of the teachers who seem not to be fully aware of the time commitment

necessary to effect change. Developers need to plan for a blending of teacher preferences with good professional development strategies.

It is recommended that taff developers working with core French teachers apply an established professional development model in preparing related but free-standing inservice activities. This will give teachers freedom of choice at the same time as a coherent change process is applied.

Assessing Providers of Professional Development

Respondents to the core French questionnaire were asked to assess the usefulness of a variety of professional development activities without particular reference to their teaching of French. This assessment was done on a four-point scale: "very useful", "useful", "somewhat useful", "of no use". Inservice activities sponsored by specialist councils are deemed to very useful or useful by 75.9% of respondents; 68.9% gave this rating to inservice activities sponsored by the district. Professional development activities at the school are very useful or useful for 54.8% and 51.1% see university undergraduate or graduate courses in a similar light. University inservice courses are valued by a somewhat lower 46.6% and publisher-presented inservice, 41.3%. Least favoured are professional development activities attached to regular staff meetings (19.0%).

French Language Development Activities

Improvement and/ or maintenance of language where there are limited opportunities for its use is an ongoing concern. A variety of responses (such as immersion experiences, courses, and discussion groups) have been devised to address this concern. A series of questions were presented to see which activities are most favoured by core French teachers.

On a four-point scale, very desirable to unappealing, respondents were asked to assess five common language development activities. The most exotic of the choices, i.e., travel to France, Quebec, etc. was also the most popular. It is deemed very desirable or desirable by 76.6% of respondents. All other options are attractive to less than 50% of the sample group. Courses taught in French and summer immersion courses are both chosen by 48.2% of respondents; participating in a discussion group, by 43.4%; and, attending francophone functions, by 32.6%. In examining the other end of the scale, attendance at francophone functions is unappealing to 38.1% and summer immersion courses are unappealing to 33.6% of respondents.

Recommendations:

It is unlikely that a short-term activity such as a limited period of travel or an immersion weekend will yield results without long-term follow-up such as regular conversational group meetings.

It is recommended that teachers who are funded for a short-term language development activity be expected to make a commitment to participate in a long-term maintenance activity.

Professional Development Interests

To survey teacher interest for inservice, a set of ten general study areas rather than an extensive list of workshop topics was developed. Teacher interest in the study areas was indicated on a five-point scale from "very desirable" to "of no interest". Promoting and maintaining interest in French is a very desirable or desirable topic for 81.9% of respondents. A similar number (81.4%) see materials and resources in the same positive way. 75.8% indicate a strong interest in personalizing the core French program and 74.2% indicate the desirability of communicative competence as a topic of study. Teaching culture, which differs from the other choices in that it is content-oriented rather than strategy-related, is attractive to a somewhat smaller number (70.1%).

A number of topics are selected as very desirable or desirable by about half the respondents: testing and evaluation, 56.8%; meeting the needs of exceptional children, 55.5%; multi-level classes, 53.8%; and grouping techniques, 51.4%. A smaller number (40.9%) identify language learning theory as a desirable or very desirable topic. When the population is divided into elementary and secondary sub-groups, there are statistically significant differences in three areas. Elementary teachers are more interested in the needs of exceptional children (86.7%) and multi-level classes (76%) while language learning theory is of much greater interest to secondary teachers (84.2%).

Recommendations:

The skill in developing workshops is not in selecting the topic but in framing the topic in a way that addresses the individual needs of teachers. As an example, based on responses to this questionnaire, a workshop on music in French might have within it attention to culture, motivation, and communicative competence, and might as well give information on materials and resources.

It becomes the task of the workshop developer to make the connection between the specific material being presented (the overt purpose of the workshop) and the issues of ongoing concern to teachers. An issue such as testing and evaluation, for example, cannot be permanently resolved by the development of a testing and evaluation workshop. Rather, it is a topic for regular examination within a variety of contexts such as unit planning, field trips, and special events.

It should be remembered that the questionnaire presented ten general areas of concern. These should not be viewed as workshop or inservice topics but as elements for inclusion, on an ongoing basis, in organized inservice activities.

It is recommended that workshops be planned in such a way as to identify and track ongoing issues of interest to teachers. At the end of the year it should be possible to identify those workshops that have, through process or content, addressed grouping techniques, multi-level classes, testing and evaluation, and so on.

In seven of the ten areas of interest there is no significant difference between elementary and secondary teachers. Indeed, throughout the questionnaire, few differences were identified. This should make it possible for all teachers of core French to work together, thus solving problems of articulation and encouraging continuity of program.

It is recommended that elementary and secondary teachers be brought together in common inservice activities and only where necessary be sub-divided to deal with issues specific to their grade levels.

FRENCH IMMERSION QUESTIONNAIRE

"Teaching is a very complex activity and not easily learned. It is idiosyncratic and situational. All at one time it must fit the learner, the context, the teacher and the knowledge or skill being taught." (Skau & Rogers, 1991) Teaching in an immersion setting adds another level of complexity to this "very complex activity" since students must be working on both second language and content skills at the same time. Teachers are drawn into immersion teaching because of their facility in French regardless of whether they have preparation as second language teachers. The immersion questionnaire seeks to (1) explore teachers' preparation for their teaching assignment, (2) explore satisfaction with their current teaching assignment, and (3) probe for teacher interests and professional development needs in both language learning and curriculum content.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE, FRENCH IMMERSION

Age, Gender and Mother Tongue

The average age of the French Immersion teaching force is 36. 79.8% are female and French is the mother tongue for 70.3%; English is the mother tongue for 21.1%, and 7.8% come from other language groups.

Language of Instruction for Educational Studies

French was the language of instruction in elementary school for the majority of immersion teachers (62.5%). 7.8% studied in both English and French, and 27.3% studied in English only. Instruction in French decreased at the secondary (57.8%) and university (51.6%) levels, but increased again for professional preparation (56.0%). It should be noted that percentages of teachers who undertook secondary and post-secondary education in both French and English increased, with a full 26% of all respondents having taken university education in both languages.

Use of French Outside the Classroom

92.2% of respondents often or always speak French at school outside the classroom and 61.7% always or often use French during their professional activities. All respondents indicated that they use *some* French outside the classroom and during the school day. For some, there seem to be fewer opportunities in their personal lives for the use of French: 47.2% always or often use French at home, 23.6% sometimes, 29.1% rarely or never. In social activities 35.4% use French always or often, 41.7% sometimes, and 22.2% rarely or never.

A further exploration of the use of French yields interesting information. Overall, immersion teachers are more likely to read in French than they are to listen to French radio or watch the French TV channel. 44.8% always or often use French in their professional reading; 42.5% sometimes. For leisure reading 45.7% always or often use French while 35.4% of respondents report its use sometimes. This pattern reverses when the use of non-print media is examined. 45.2% of respondents rarely or never listen to French radio and 32.5% rarely or never watch French TV. From this it can be seen that immersion teachers in Calgary are not necessarily "living in French". Maintenance of French fluency may be a concern.

Professional Credentials and Affiliations

43.2% of respondents have an undergraduate degree. 45.6% have a post-degree certificate and 11.2% have a graduate degree.

One-third of immersion teachers who teach with the Calgary Board of Education list Alberta (34.4%) as the province issuing their teaching certificate. 31.1% indicate Quebec; 11.5% list Ontario; 9.8% indiate B.C., Saskatchewan or the Atlantic provinces; and, 13.1% indicate that they have certificates from more than one province. It seems that a number of teachers have disregarded the fact that they must have an Alberta certificate. It might be inferred, then, that respondents chose to identify only the province from which they received their initial teaching certificate.

Slightly more than half (52.8%) belong to a specialist council or other professional organization, and 51.2% say that they regularly read professional journals. 9.6% are currently taking university courses.

Teaching Experience

The median for total years of teaching experience is 6 to 7 years, while the median time actually spent teaching in an immersion French setting is 5 to 6 years. It seems that most immersion teachers have had some experience teaching children in a first-language setting. The median number of years with the Calgary Board of Education is 4 to 5 years. 70.0% of these teachers have never taught core French.

Current Position and Assignment

57.8% of respondents indicate that they are currently in an elementary or elementary team teaching situation. 31.3% have a secondary teaching assignment. 3.2% have administrative responsibilities while 6.3% fall into other categories.

For 78.4% of respondents, all of their teaching is done in French. Smaller numbers have a split French/English assignment, with 14.4% reporting about three-quarters of their teaching in French, 5.6% about half, and the remaining 1.6% less than half in French.

INTEREST SURVEY, FRENCH IMMERSION

Career Assessment

Two questions ask teachers to report on their teaching abilities. In both questions, a five-point Likert scale of 1 (adequate) to 5 (excellent) is used.

When asked to rate their general teaching ability, 82.7% place themselves at 4 or 5 on the scale. A somewhat surprising 3.9% place themselves at 1 or 2. When asked to rate their teaching ability in immersion, the overall assessment drops: 78.7% place themselves in the very good to excellent range; a larger 16.5% place themselves at mid-point on the scale; and, a larger 4.7% place themselves on the lower end of the scale.

An examination of the relationship between teaching ability generally and immersion teaching ability found that there is a statistically significant relationship ($x^2 = 49.87$; df = 1; $p<.01$): teachers who doubt their general teaching abilities have even greater doubts about their immersion teaching. It could be concluded that the increased complexity of teaching in an immersion setting causes teachers to have increased concerns about their abilities.

A further question asks teachers to rate the vigor of their careers on a scale of 1 (stagnant) to 5 (vigorous). 72.9% selected 4 or 5 on the scale; 22.8% place themselves at a mid-point between stagnant and vigorous; 4.7% rate their careers as nearly stagnant or stagnant.

In the three questions that ask teachers to report on their teaching abilities and their career vigor, cross tabulations yield no significant relationships except that between general ability and immersion ability described above. There is also no statistically significant difference between elementary and secondary teachers in their career assessment.

Teaching Assignment

A set of questions was devised to give immersion teachers an opportunity to comment on the suitability/ desirability of their current teaching assignment. If they could adjust the amount of their teaching assignment in French, 12.9% would teach more, 4.3% would teach less, while fully 79.3% would stay the same. An interesting 3.4% are unsure.

If they could adjust the grade level at which they teach, 48.4% would teach a higher grade, 47.4% would stay the same and only 4% would move to a lower

grade. When grouped by mother tongue, 89.3% of francophones indicate a desire to move to a higher grade. Several reasons could be inferred. Two possibilities are: (1) although immersion is a second language learning situation, teachers who have been trained to teach students in their first language may believe that immersion students at higher grade levels function more like first language learners;. (2) the teaching preparation of these teachers was for work at grade levels higher than where they are presently assigned. Because of the very high numbers of teachers involved, this placement issue warrants further investigation.

Barriers to Instruction

Nine probes were designed to allow teachers to identify the degree of importance of some common barriers to quality instruction. As in the core French questionnaire, there were few missing cases. It can be inferred that respondents are enthusiastic about sharing their perceptions of problems usually understood to be beyond the control of the teacher.

Respondents identify the lack of opportunity for students to speak French as a very serious barrier (66.1%). Nearly as serious is their concern for the quality of teaching materials (64.6%) and class size (63.2%). Slightly more than half of respondents see the attitude in the school (55.5%) and support materials (57.8%) as very serious barriers. Slightly less than half of respondents (46.9%) identified communication with parents as a very serious barrier. While differences in the ability levels of students was seen as very serious by only 36.7%, it is important to note that all respondents assigned some degree of importance to this barrier. Two other barriers were of at least some concern to all respondents: quality of teaching materials and lack of support materials.

A further question asks teachers to judge whether their school possesses all the resources that immersion students need. 43.2% agree that their school has all the necessary resources but a larger 56.8% report that this is *not* the case.

When responses to this question are examined by mother tongue sub-groups, significant differences appear only in three instances. Francophones are significantly more concerned about student use of French ($x^2 = 9.41$; $df = 1$; $p < .01$) and about quality of program materials ($x^2 = 4.24$; $df = 1$; $p < .05$). This further supports the notion that the gap between student language abilities and resources is of special concern to teachers working in their *first* language with students learning in their *second* language.

One further barrier is significantly more serious to francophones. 81.1% see the general attitude of the school as a serious barrier to instruction.

Recommendations:

While the barriers to instruction presented in this question set may be seen as beyond the control of the teachers, in fact appropriate classroom practice can offset many of the problems.

It is recommended that these concerns be acknowledged during organized professional development activities and through such vehicles as the district newsletter. The means for dealing productively with these barriers.should be examined as part of the continuing professional education of teachers.

Attributes Contributing to Success

In assessing factors that are necessary to good teaching in the immersion setting, the teachers not only provide that information but give insights into their own understanding of language learning. Teachers were asked to assess five factors on a five-point scale (1 = of no importance to 5 = very important). 78% judge the ability to speak French fluently as very important to success as an immersion teacher, while no one judges fluency as unimportant.

75.6% judge knowledge of content areas to be very important and, although no one sees this as totally without importance, 3.2% do put it at mid-point or below on the scale.

Grammatical skills are assessed as very important by 63%, and 8.7% place this factor at mid-point or below on the scale. 55.9% see an understanding of the second language learning process as very important to their immersion teaching. 33.9% see it as important and 10.2% select the mid-point on the scale.

A francophone background is viewed as very important by 48.8% of respondents, while 18.2% see it as having little or no importance.

Cross-tabs were done to test for differing perceptions depending on mother tongue of the respondents. No statistically significant differences were found in teacher assessment of factors necessary to good teaching in the immersion setting.

Preparation for Immersion Teaching

An assessment of experiences which have provided preparation for immersion teaching was sought. Respondents were asked to assign one of five letter grades (excellent to fail) to a set of experiences. The highest overall rating goes to consultation with colleagues (77.2%). Next in rating is initial teacher training with 44.1% assessing it as excellent or very good. District inservice rates third with 38.6% in the top two categories. While this would at first suggest that initial teacher training is more highly rated than district inservice, it should be noted

that district inservice receives poor or failing grades from very few teachers (4%), while initial teacher training receives a poor or failing grade from one quarter of respondents (24.4%).

Present Commitment to Professional Development

A number of questions were developed to ascertain teachers' present involvement in and commitment to professional development, both in language learning and in the various curriculum content areas.

First, teachers were asked to describe the number of hours dedicated to professional development activities during the last twelve months in nine common curriculum areas. They were also asked to indicate in which language the activities were conducted.

When the top three response categories are examined, it is found that 46.1% of teachers attended Social Studies inservice in French, reporting a mean of 12.1 hours on that activity. 44.5% attended FLA inservice in French, for a yearly mean of 12.6 hours. Accessing of inservice in French falls off seriously at this point. The third highest is Art with 18.7% teachers attending at a mean level of 6.6 hours.

A similar examination of attendance at P.D. sessions delivered in English shows lower levels of participation, both in percentage attendance and in mean hours. Mathematics inservice attracts 24.2% for 5.9 mean hours; Social Studies attracts attendance of 21.9% for 3.8 mean hours, and Science attracts 20.3% for 3.4 mean hours.

Examined overall, professional development that is directed at specific curriculum content areas seems to receive very little attention. Social Studies and FLA are the two apparent exceptions to this situation.

When asked whether they receive sufficient professional development for their present teaching assignment, 52.8% agree or strongly agree, 29.9% disagree, 3.9% strongly disagree, and a rather large 13.4% are undecided. When asked if choosing professional development activities is made difficult by the number of options available, one-quarter agree that this is the case. However, 61.9% do not have difficulty making choices., and 12.7% are undecided.

60.8% of teachers assign high or very high priority to professional development activities in second language learning theory. For 23.2% this is not a high priority and a relatively large 16% are undecided. When asked if they are ready to enrol in second language learning theory activities, a smaller 46% are ready to do so immediately or in the near future. One-third indicate that they would do so eventually while 13.5% say not at all.

Information

Two questions are specifically directed at assessing teachers' access to resource information at the district level. 69.7% agree or strongly agree that such information is readily available. 11.5% strongly disagree or are uncertain about the availability of district resource information. As an information tool that will assist in classroom planning, the district newsletter appears to be limited in its usefulness. Only 18.7% always or often find the information useful as a planning tool; 69.1% indicate they sometimes or rarely find it useful and 12.2% never find it useful.

Recommendations:

Elsewhere in the questionnaire, respondents indicate that (a) they read professional materials in French and (b) reading is a preferred form of professional development. Therefore, it is very important that the potential of the newsletter be realized.

It is recommended that a French language newsletter be developed for immersion teachers.

It is further recommended that primary responsibility for the content of the newsletter be given to committees of teachers, and that specialists and consultants provide support and assistance.

External Supports

A number of departments, agencies and organizations provide support and continuing professional education to teachers. Immersion teachers were asked to judge the effectiveness of a selection of these providers.

The Second Languages Team provides very useful or useful support to 70.9% of respondents. 16.5% do not find this support useful and 12.6% are undecided. 56.8% strongly agree or agree that assistance from the university is useful. This assessment of university assistance is substantially higher than the assessment of school professional days. A puzzling 40.9% do not find their own school's professional days of any assistance with their immersion teaching. A further 12.6% are undecided.

There is some lack of congruity between the teachers' assessment of institutional support and their assessment of support from individuals in these institutions. For example, despite the ineffectiveness of school professional days, when immersion teachers are asked to rate the help they receive from individuals, their own colleagues rate highest. 48.8% indicate that they receive a great deal of help or considerable help from other teachers. And, although the university rates reasonably high as an institution, university instructors and professors are seen as providing no assistance by over 60% of respondents.

When asked to rate the help that they receive with their teaching from the school principal, 28.6% of immersion teachers rate it as a great deal or considerable while 11.9% indicate they get no help. (For schools where helping the immersion teacher is a delegated responsibility, this question may have been somewhat misleading since the item referred specifically to the school principal.) 78% report average or limited assistance from consultants and specialists; 17.3% indicate a great deal or considerable, and 4.7% report that they receive no help from this source.

39.2% of respondents indicate assistance from publishers' representatives as being average or limited, whereas 58.4% report no help from the publishing houses.

In the Calgary teaching community many professional development opportunities are presented in English. A series of questions was developed to discover the impact that this professional development has on immersion teachers. 4.8% always, and 36.5% often, participate in English professional development; 46.8% sometimes do, while 11.9% rarely or never participate.

51.2% indicate it is always or often easy to transfer what has been learned in English inservice to their French teaching. 40.7% say this transfer is sometimes easy while 8.1% say it is rarely or never easy. This assessment of transfer is interesting given that immersion teachers find some lack of sensitivity to their needs in the English professional development. Only 17.5% indicate that they always or often find presenters sensitive to their needs as immersion teachers. 42.5% rarely or never find presenters sensitive to their needs, 40% say there is sometimes a lack of sensitivity.

Continuing with the exploration of their use of English in professional development, immersion teachers were asked if they need courses to improve their competence in English. 71.4% indicate that they have no need of such inservice; 3.2% are undecided while 28.6% agree or strongly agree that they could benefit from English language courses. When asked when they would enrol, however, a smaller 16.8% say immediately or in the near future. 16% say eventually, 63.2% say not at all, and 4% are undecided.

Recommendations:

Concern must be expressed for the limited capacity of the system to provide continuing professional education in French. No matter how generalizeable professional development initiatives are, if they can not be delivered in French, where appropriate, a substantial part of the system's ability to facilitate change is lost . One way to deal with this is to empower teachers to support and teach each other.

Elsewhere in this questionnaire teachers indicate that they learn best from peers. In this section they make known that, when they do attend English

inservice activities, there is commonly an absence of sensitivity to the particular needs of immersion teaching and that they experience varying degrees of difficulty in making use of inservice delivered in English.

It is recommended that immersion teachers be encouraged and prepared to develop and deliver their own organized inservice activities. This approach will require ongoing attention and support from specialists. The teacher-developed activities should be presented in French and should deal with curriculum issues from the immersion perspective.

Although school professional development days should play an important part in the professional growth of all teachers, 53.5% of immersion teachers do not find their school's P.D. days of assistance. As responsibility for the P.D. days rests at the school level, it is there that changes can be effected..

It is recommended that a guidebook/ handbook/ idea book be developed to assist the P.D.committees of schools with immersion programs. This guide should encourage teachers to assist one another rather than looking to external sources for support. Examples might include: simple instructions for establishing quality circles; descriptions of the literature round table and the materials review concepts; lists of immersion resource people from other schools, central office, or the university; and samples of exemplary P.D.day programs.

It is recommended that consideration be given to the development of inservice on professional development for members of immersion P.D. committees. Such inservice would have as its goal increasing the independence of the P.D. committee and the quality of the P.D. day experience.

Lesson Planning

Four questions were asked with a view to understanding how teachers use provincial curriculum documents in their lesson planning. Immersion French teachers report that they have a very good to good understanding of the theoretical framework on which the Program of Studies is based (89.7%). Only one respondent (0.8%) indicated no understanding of the theoretical underpinnings and one was undecided.

When the question moves from understanding to use, there is a marked shift in the response pattern. 10.5% of respondents say that the curriculum documents are rarely or never an important guide; 41.9% say they are often an important guide; 20.2% always; 27.4% sometimes. There are 4 missing cases.

16.9% of respondents always depend on the immersion curriculum documents for the preparation of their lessons. 41.8% often do, while 25.8% say that they sometimes depend on the documents, and 16.1% indicate they rarely or never use them.

It is also of interest to discover the role that the English program curriculum documents might play in the planning done by immersion teachers. 20.8% always or often use this source; 27.2%, sometimes, and 52% rarely or never use them.

Recommendations:

There are wide variations in the frequency of curriculum document use. This may suggest a lack of familiarity with the documents. While it is not suggested that there be wholesale use of curriculum documents, it would seem appropriate to ensure that teachers are making informed choices by confirming their familiarity with the contents of these documents.

It is recommended that there be an analysis of the use of curriculum documents in organized inservice activities, and in informal discussions between specialists and teachers, and that, where appropriate, this use be increased or enhanced..

Learning Styles

A letter grade system (excellent to fail) was used for a set of questions which explore how teachers learn best. Immersion teachers were asked to evaluate how a variety of learning experiences contribute to the quality of their teaching.

Informal discussion with colleagues receives an excellent or very good rating from 79.5% of respondents. This is the only experience for which none of the respondents reply "not applicable".

There are striking similarities in the response patterns of the next three experiences: coaching; working with a mentor or master teacher; and working in a group in the presence of an expert. All three receive an excellent or very good rating by more than half of respondents (58.7%, 56.7%, and 51.2% respectively). None of the three receive a failing grade. However, by choosing the "not applicable" category, large numbers of respondents (15.1%, 21.3%, and 11% respectively) seem to be indicating that they have no experience with these types of learning. A final observation on this particular group of experiences is that they are not assigned a failing grade by any respondents.

Reading and thinking alone is graded highly by a similarly large number of teachers (55.4%). In addition, it receives a "good" grade from 24.4%, so in total it is appreciated by 79.8% of respondents.

Reading followed by discussion with a colleague and reading followed by discussion with a known group are rated excellent or very good by 31.5% and 31% respectively and are seen as not applicable by one-quarter of respondents.

Recommendations:

Two sets of data point to the potential effectiveness of reading as a continuing professional education tool. First, reading is the communicative activity most frequently undertaken in French by immersion teachers. Second, reading and thinking alone is highly regarded as a way of improving teaching practice.

It is recommended that attention be given to print media as a tool for professional development. This attention might take the form of: facilitating the exchange of teacher response journals; organized circulation of professional articles, journals or books; an electronic bulletin board; etc.

Both mentoring and coaching are recognized avenues of professional development within the Calgary Board of Education. No immersion teacher who has had experience with these forms of professional development gave them a failing grade on the questionnaire. However, many are unfamiliar with these professional development experiences.

It is recommended that opportunities be sought to establish coaching as an available professional development option. It is further recommended that new immersion teachers be encouraged to access the Calgary Board of Education mentoring program "Introduction to Teaching".

Reflective Practice

Reflection has become an important tool for teachers' professional development. A series of probes was developed to determine activities which cause immersion teachers to think about, or reflect upon, their teaching. Responses were placed on a four-point scale with a "not applicable" category as a fifth option.

The most important stimulus to reflection appears to be discussion with other teachers as it is selected as very important by 44.9% of respondents. No respondent suggests that this is without importance and no one identifies it as not applicable. No other activity elicits a similarly high percentage. Second in importance are conferences and seminars, with 20.5% of respondents finding them very important.

In the very important category, workshops (19.2%) and mentoring (19.4%) carry equal weight with immersion teachers. The difference appears in the N/A category, which is used by no respondents when considering workshops but by 34.7% of respondents considering mentoring. This remarkable increase in the use of "not applicable" suggests that this is an activity with which many teachers are unfamiliar. Even larger numbers use N/A when describing the contribution made to reflection by university courses (42.9%) and university inservice courses (52.8%).

Recommendations:

Reflection and collegial interaction are now understood to be important tools for the improvement of teaching practice.

It is recommended that efforts be made to facilitate reflection through the maintenance of a registry of teachers wishing to engage in response journal writing and exchange.

It is further recommended that a a regularly scheduled (e.g. once a month) drop-in event be developed. Teachers would attend such a center/ event for conversation and sharing of resources and ideas. It would require planning and facilitation from central office personnel, but need not require dedicated space. It might indeed meet each time in a different school and might be hosted by a committee of interested teachers. An examination of the concept of the drive-in workshop might be useful.

Motivations

Seven probes were used to ascertain the motivational factors for teachers when participating in inservice activities. New content is a great or secondary interest to 99.2% of immersion teachers. The desire to improve teaching skills is very important or important to 91.3% of teachers.

Inservice for personal interest is important to 84.6%, while inservice for professional contacts is important to 83.5%. 73.2% are interested in inservice as a means to upgrade credentials. For 56.6% of respondents, inservice is important as a means for solving teaching problems but 34.2% have little or no interest in inservice for this reason and 8.2% are uncertain.

Inservice as an avenue for social interaction is important to 43.3%, while 55.1% have little or no interest in using this avenue for social interaction. It appears that respondents have made a distinction between conversations with colleagues, which they value highly as spur to reflection, and social interactions, which they do not see as important in the inservice context.

Change Process

Two questions were designed to explore immersion teachers' tacit/ intuitive knowledge of change in teaching practice and how it might occur. 66.1% of immersion teachers prefer activities that are completed in a single meeting. Since it is accepted that change occurs over time, this response implies that teachers do not have knowledge of how change occurs or have not had experience with inservice which incorporates the change process.

When asked how long it takes to incorporate a new idea into a teaching repertoire, more than half did not respond. It seems that this is an issue to which teachers have given little thought.

Recommendations:

Adding a new strategy, technique or resource to a teaching repertoire is a complex process which can only be achieved over time. Teachers who do not understand this can be frustrated and disappointed at their inability to make changes immediately, and come to see themselves as inadequate.

It is recommended that the organizers of professional development articulate a clear personal understanding of the change process, and share that understanding with the teachers so that everyone is aware of the complexity of change and the time required to achieve it.

P.D. Formatting and Scheduling Preferences

A set of questions was designed to establish teacher preferences for presentation format and the scheduling of organized professional development activities. Teachers made their responses on a four-point scale ranging from great interest to no interest.

Given four formats, i.e., demonstration, lecture (didactic teaching), seminar, or workshop, teachers indicate great interest in the workshop format (69.6%), while that format is of little or no interest to 6.4%. Demonstrations are of great interest to 65.9%, but they are of little or no interest to 7.2%. 54.4% indicate a great interest in seminars while a higher 13.6% have little or no interest in this format. While the didactic format came last in the set of four, it should be noted that they are not without value since over half the respondents indicate a secondary interest in this format.

The question dealing with the blocks of time that might be devoted to inservice activities produced the following results for the "best" category: half day, 54.1%; full day, 50.8%; two days, 23%; one hour, 20.7%; a series of meetings, 20.5%; weekend, 5.7%. It is important to note that the weekend format is of little or no interest to 77.2%. More encouraging is the fact that a series of meetings is of secondary interest to 36.1% of respondents.

When presented with choices for the timetabling of professional development, immersion teachers indicate a lack of interest in activities scheduled outside the school day. While 63.5% show great interest in school mornings and 44.1% show great interest in school afternoons, 59% have little or no interest in activities following dismissal, 69.3% no interest in weekday evenings, and 85.1% no interest in Friday-Saturday combinations. Of the out-of-school hours, the most acceptable time block is following dismissal (39.4% indicating some or great interest).

The same four-point scale was used to determine teacher preferences for professional development within the calendar year. Blocks of time were identified to coincide with the school and/ or the university calendars. The September to December block is the most popular, being of great interest to 68.3% of immersion teachers. It is followed by the January to March block, which is of great interest to 38.1% and of secondary interest to another 46.8%. The April to June time period is of great interest to 23.6%. Immediately following the school year is of no interest to 55.6% while being of great or secondary interest to 13%. When examining the summer vacation period, there is more interest in inservice prior to the beginning of the school year, that is, in late August. 14.4% indicate great interest in this time block, and another 24.8% indicate a secondary interest.

Assessing Providers of Professional Development

Without particular reference to immersion, teachers were asked to rate the usefulness of a variety of professional development activities. When the useful and very useful categories are combined, professional development provided by the specialist councils rates highest at 77.2%. That is followed by P.D. provided by the district at 65.4%, and P.D. days at school at 59.8%. Staff meetings incorporating professional development are useful or very useful to 39.4% while 15% find this of no use.

University graduate and undergraduate courses are ranked useful or very useful by 55.1% of respondents. Faring less well are university inservice courses at 29.4%. It must be noted that the undecided categories are very large for the university-related items, at 28% and 47.9% respectively. The same is true for publisher-sponsored inservice which has 40% in the undecided category and 19.2% assessing it as useful or very useful.

Recommendations:

Large numbers of immersion teachers appear to be uninformed about the services and support which are available at the university.

It is recommended that The University of Calgary, particularly the Faculty of Education and the French Centre, be encouraged to provide detailed information about courses, seminars, etc. to immersion teachers.

French Language Maintenance Activities

Immersion French teachers living in an anglophone environment may experience an erosion of French language skills. A set of questions was asked to determine this group's interests in a variety of French language activities. On a four-point scale, very useful to not at all useful, with an undecided category, respondents were asked to assess five common language enhancement activities.

Taking courses in French is judged very useful by 44%, useful for 24% and somewhat useful for another 8%. Travel to Quebec, France, etc. is seen as very usefulby 29.6%, useful by 36.8%, and somewhat useful by another 12.8%. Attending francophone functions and taking summer courses are both seen as very useful by 26.4%. In the useful category, 37.6% choose francophone functions while a somewhat larger 43.2% choose summer courses.

21% say that discussion groups are very useful, and a corresponding 21% find them of no use. Overall, this is the activity that finds least acceptance among immersion teachers. Apparently, the opportunity to discuss in small groups in workshop sessions is not equated with learning from colleagues on an informal basis, an activity which is rated highly by respondents in other parts of the questionnaire.

Assessing Professional Development Interests

Having explored professional development interests and needs through a variety of probes, a final set of questions was designed to provide teachers with the opportunity to specifically identify their professional development interests. Rather than an extensive list of workshop topics, a set of eleven general study areas was developed. Teacher interest in the study areas is indicated on a four-point scale from great interest to no interest.

The area of professional development most desired is materials and resources, selected by 95.3% of respondents as having either primary or secondary interest. Next comes maintaining student interest in French, which is an area of interest for 91.2%. Two areas receive equal attention, which is not surprising since they both concern themselves with differentiated schooling: they are individualizing instruction and responding to students with exceptional needs. Both are rated of interest by 91.3% of respondents.

Another set of two related areas received equal attention: communicative competence and language across the curriculum. They are.both rated of interest or great interest by 89.8% of respondents.

Grouping techniques are of great or secondary interest to 86.5%; teaching culture to 85%; language learning theory to 84.3%; and, team teaching to 76.4%. Multi-level classes as an area of study is the only one that falls below 50%: only 46.8% indicate an interest in this area.

Recommendations:

It is important to note that the areas of interest described in the narrative are not workshop topics. It is unlikely that teacher interest could be completely satisfied with a single event or even a series of events dedicated to any one of the eleven issues.

It is recommended that these areas of interest be regularly incorporated into organized inservice activities either as a primary focus or as issues of concern when other topics are being addressed.

An Intensive Professional Development Course

Teachers were reminded that every year in the month of August, the Faculty St-Jean in Edmonton offers an intensive professional development activity for teachers in French immersion. 7.1% indicate they have attended this activity. Asked if they thought a similar event should be held in Calgary, 92.1% respond affirmatively. However,when the question specifically asks if they would attend a professional development course offered in the summer in Calgary, the percentage drops to 49.5%. This dichotomy could be the result of several factors , one of which might be that the respondents think other teachers need the course and that it should be available locally.

Cross tabulations were done to explore for statistically significant relationships between those teachers who would attend a late summer event and their general inservice interests. Only one significant relationship was found. 83.3% of those teachers who would attend a intensive professional development course in summer have **no** interest in the issue of language learning across the curriculum (*l'enseignement de la langue à travers les différentes matières).*

Recommendations:

Despite the lower affirmative response when teachers were asked if they would attend an intensive professional development course in the summer, the fact that half of respondents indicate that they would attend such a course should not be overlooked.

It is recommended that a committee of stakeholders be established to develop and deliver a late summer professional development event for immersion teachers. Such an event should not confine itself to teachers new to Alberta but rather should have several segments, each developed with a specific target audience in mind. This report provides guidance for both content and formatting to be used.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the three months that we have been working with the questionnaire results, we have become convinced that there are trends worthy of further study and discussion. The trends found in the questionnaire are not startling because they mirror general educational trends. These trends fall into three broad categories: change, reflection and empowerment.

Change is a characteristic of dynamic school systems. Ongoing change results from societal changes, shifting demographics, developing technologies, and constantly evolving understandings of teaching and learning.

At a time when the curriculum leaders and school-based educators with the Calgary Board of Education are moving towards implementation of program continuity configurations, it is important that change, and the process by which it occurs, be understood. This is particularly important for educators who work in the complex area of second language acquisition.

To empower teachers may require a shift in emphasis for educators working as consultants, specialists and supervisors. It may require that greater amounts of their efforts go into facilitation and coordination of professional development. Empowerment requires a kind of leadership which supports teachers as they take on greater personal professional responsibility. Consultants and other central office personnel will measure their success, not from the knowledge they impart, but from their ability to create long range professional development plans which provide for continuity and consistency while at the same time providing teachers with opportunities for independence and empowerment.

Recently there have been impressive developments in the acceptance of teachers' own personal practical knowledge as a valid means of improving teaching. This acceptance of reflection as a means to examine one's own practice is not yet well incorporated into professional development planning. There is a place for leadership that assists and supports teachers as they exercise their own powers of reflection and extend their own personal practical knowledge.

In conclusion, we would like to encourage staff developers to interpret their role broadly so that large numbers of teachers can obtain maximum benefit from their efforts. Not all teachers have a natural or spontaneous appreciation for the role that professional development will play in the improvement of their teaching abilities. A most rewarding role for the staff developer is to provide leadership in assisting teachers to recognize the potential of continuing professional education in its many forms.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brickell, Henry M., and Paul, Regina H. "Ready for the '80's? A Look at Foreign Language Teachers and Teaching At the Start of the Decade." Foreign Language Annals vol. 15, no. 3, 1982, pp 169 - 184.

"This report is intended to provide information to foreign language educators regarding the current dimensions of professional concerns and to stimulate efforts to address problems which emerge from the [American] study."

Cooper, Thomas C. "A Survey of Teacher Concerns" Foreign Language Annals, vol. 18, no. 1, 1985, pp 21 - 24.

Delineates a national survey of American educators conducted to find out from them what their most pressing questions were regarding foreign language learning and teaching.

Fullan, Michael. The Meaning of Educational Change. Toronto: OISE Press. 1982.

Hall, Gene E. and Hord, Shirley M. Change in Schools: Facilitating the Process. State University of New York Press. 1987.

Addresses in a practical way the question of what educators and educational administrators can do to become more effective in bringing about beneficial change.

Johnson, William L., Askins, Billy E., Huling-Austin, Leslie, "A Quantitative Study on the Training Needs in Pre- and In-service Bilingual Education". Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, April 23 - 27, 1984.

Describes an instrument used to identify teacher training needs. Assisted us in clarifying how our approach should differ given our understandings of both professional development and language learning.

Jones, Linda L. and Hayes, Andrew E. "How Valid are Surveys of Teacher Needs?" Educational Leadership February 1980, pp. 390 - 392.

The writers found that teachers' preferences for in-service activities did not necessarily reflect needs. Questions on a survey, therefore, should be aimed at identifying symptoms rather than development activities.

Joyce, Bruce and Showers, Beverly. "The Coaching of Teaching" Educational Leadership. October 1982. pp. 4-10.

The article presents a four-step model for effective staff development. The model described takes into account the need for time and practice for the successful implementation of new techniques and strategies.

Lamarre, Patricia. Professional Development of Core French Teachers. Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers, 1986.

Selected annotated bibliography of general literature on inservice education and specific literature on inservice education of second language teachers.

Lieberman, Ann and Miller, Lynne. Teachers, Their World, and Their Work. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, Virginia. 1984.

This book explores the social realities of teaching. It describes the pressures that teachers experience; the relentlessness of the teaching day, the contradictions of receiving validation from the clients you hope to shape and change, and the isolation of the workplace. It suggests models for staff development that take these and other realities into account.

Loucks-Horsley, Susan, et al. Continuing to Learn: A Guidebook for Teacher Development. Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands and National Staff Development Council. 1987

When teachers become partners in improving their schools and their districts, good professional development can not only take place under "adverse" conditions but can, in fact, contribute to the alleviation of those conditions.

Marshall, Jon C. and Caldwell, Sarah DeJarnette. "How Valid Are Formal, Informal Needs Assessment Methods for Planning Staff Development Programs?" NASSP BULLETIN, November 1984, pp 24 - 30.

Formal assessment provides general information yielding macro-level needs identification which is sufficient for the initial planning of inservice programs.

Rogers, Lorelei M. "In-service Participant Profile." Unpublished paper. 1984.

Draws a profile of teachers most likely to participate in the kind of in-service provided by The University of Calgary.

Samuels, Marilyn and Price, M. Anne. Inservice Evaluation Project. Alberta Department of Education, 1986.

Sets out preferences for inservice topics observed across groups of respondents varying in their teaching context. Includes the instrument used to collect data.

Schiffer, Judith. School Renewal Through Staff Development. Teachers College Press, Columbia University. 1980.

Staff development models tend to focus on either personal change or fulfilling organizational goals. The author harmonizes these objectives and sketches out a model for designing staff development programs that can lead to the realization of professional potential for teachers and renewal for schools.

Schon, Donald A. The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action. New York: Basic Books. 1983.

Skau, Kathryn and Rogers, Lorelei. "The Challenge of Mentoring: Continuing to Learn" A paper presented at WestCAST 1991 (in press).

This paper focusses on first year teachers; their unique problems and formalized mentoring programs as a response to those needs. Suggestions for preparation of mentors are made and some cautions concerning pitfalls in formalized mentroing programs are raised.

Weiss, Patricia and Gallagher, James J. "Project TARGET: A Needs Assessment Approach to Gifted Education Inservice" Gifted Child Quarterly Summer 1986, vol. 30, no. 3, pp 114 - 118.

Describes the needs assessment approach taken in the development of a gifted program inservice training module.

Wilton, Florence, Obadia, Andre A., Roy, Robert R., Saunders, A. Brian, Tafler, Rhoda. National Study of French Immersion Teacher Training and Professional Development.. Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers, 1984.

Contains the questionnaire sent to Immersion teachers across Canada. Permission was received to use elements as a model for some of the questions in our survey.

Yarger, Sam J., Howey, Kenneth R., Joyce, Bruce R. Inservice Teacher Education. Booksend Laboratory, 1980.

Sets out the results of a survey of educators conducted in Georgia, Michigan and California. The study drew a profile of teachers most likely to involve themselves in professional development activities.